



NEWS RELEASE

Illinois Environmental Protection Agency

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Illinois EPA Recognizes Four Science Students for Environmental Excellence Awards

SPRINGFIELD — The Illinois Environmental Protection Agency (Illinois EPA) presented Environmental Excellence Awards to four Illinois students at the Illinois Junior Academy of Science (IJAS) State Science Exposition. The competition was hosted by Southern Illinois University Carbondale and IJAS on Saturday, April 29, 2023.

Criteria for the Environmental Excellence Award include addressing the prevention of pollution, the remediation of air, land, or water, analyzing the effect of pollution on our environment, or innovative ways to prevent or address contamination in the environment. The four projects were chosen to receive a medal, certificate, and a science kit to further their research. The winners are:

Zahra Nathani from Niles West High School in Skokie

Project Title: Synthesis and Testing of ZIF-8 as a CO₂ Capturing Agent

Project Category: Chemistry

Vignesh Tiruvannamalai from Illinois STEM Society in Naperville

Project Title: Conventional Paints vs. Natural Alternatives: Impacts on Water Quality Over Time

Project Category: Environmental Science

Collin Porter from Calvin Christian School in South Holland

Project Title: Never Fear Water is Here!

Project Category: Botany

Ruqayah Wafa from Science Academy of Chicago in Mt. Prospect

Project Title: Exploring Microfiltration Techniques on Graywater

Project Category: Environmental Science

The Illinois Junior Academy of Science provides students with insight into the problems and methods of thinking that are particular to the scientist but applicable to other occupations. The curriculum includes information concerning new investigations and discoveries in science and an understanding of the science-produced equipment used.

The Illinois EPA Environmental Education Coordinator and staff from the Marion Regional Office judged and selected the four students/projects to receive awards.

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